

# GUILDS, MONARCHS AND MARKETS

Dimensions of Inland and Maritime  
Trade in Medieval Peninsular India

EDITORS  
N. CHANDRAMOULI  
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INDIRA GANDHI NATIONAL CENTRE FOR THE ARTS  
PONDICHERRY UNIVERSITY



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NEW DELHI**



**PONDICHERRY UNIVERSITY,  
PUDUCHERRY**

# **Guilds, Monarchs and Markets: Dimensions of Inland and Maritime Trade in Medieval Peninsular India**

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*(From the earliest times up to 16<sup>th</sup> Century)*

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# KARNATAKA'S MARITIME CONTACTS DURING THE VIJAYANAGARA PERIOD

La Na Swamy

## Abstract

*The Vijayanagara kingdom founded by Harihara and Bukka of the Sangama dynasty in 1336 was ruled by Sangama, Saluva, Tulava and Aravidu dynasties. It lasted until C E 1646, although its power declined after a major military defeat in the Battle of Talikota in CE 1565. The writings of medieval European travellers and the literature in local languages provide crucial information about its history. The economy of the empire was dependent on agriculture. In the semi-arid regions around the capital excluding the river banks regions jowar, cotton, pulse and beans were grown. Betel leaves, areca nut (for chewing), and coconut were the principal cash crops and everywhere these were cultivated with the help of tanks and well irrigation. According to the sources of China the empire had 300 ports, large and small, on the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal. Mangalore, Honnavara, Bhatkal, Barkur, Cochin and Kannur, were important ports on the west coast. Silk was imported from China and sugar from Bengal. In this paper the Maritime trade activity of the empire through the ports of the west coast and the trade routes connecting to the capital and sculptural and numismatic evidences are discussed in detail.*

## Introduction

The Vijayanagara kingdom was founded by Harihara and Bukka of the Sangama dynasty in 1336. At the instance of their guru Vidyaranya, they established their kingdom with its capital at Vijayanagar. This empire was ruled by Sangama, Salva, Tulava and Aravidu dynasties.

It lasted until 1646 CE, although its power declined after a major military defeat in the Battle of Talikota in 1565 CE by the combined armies of the Deccan sultanates. The writings of medieval European travelers such as Domingo Paes, Fernão Nunes, and Niccolò Da Conti, and the literature in local languages provide crucial information about its history. Archaeological studies at Vijayanagara have revealed the empire's power and wealth.

Largely, the economy of the empire was dependent on agriculture. In the Irrigated areas and the region close to Malnad where regular rainy season provide sufficient water for cultivation their sugarcane, rice, and wheat grow well in semi-arid regions around the capital except the river banks regions jowar, cotton, pulse and beans were grown. Betel leaves, areca nut (for chewing), and coconut were the principal cash crops and in everywhere these were cultivated with the help of tank and well irrigation. The empire's vibrant textile industry depended on the local large-scale cotton production. Spices such as turmeric, pepper, cardamom, and ginger grew in the remote Malnad hill region and were transported to the city for trade. The empire's capital city was a thriving business center that included a burgeoning market in large quantities of precious gems and gold. Prolific temple-building provided employment to thousands of masons, sculptors, and other skilled artisans.

In the daily market rose petals used for the preparation of perfumes was availability. The cultivation of roses attracted a lower tax. Salt production was controlled by the administration. The making of ghee and selling was profitable. Exports to China intensified and included cotton, spices, jewels, semi-precious stones, ivory, rhino horn, ebony, amber, coral, and aromatic products such as perfumes.

According to the sources of China the empire had 300 ports, large and small, on the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal. The ports of Mangalore, Honavar, Bhatkal, Barkur, Cochin and Cannanore, were the most important ports on the west coast. Ship building prospered and



keeled ships of 1000–1200 *bahares* (burden) were built without decks by sewing the entire hull with ropes rather than fastening them with nails. Ships sailed to the Red Sea ports namely Aden and Mecca with Vijayanagara goods and these commodities were sold as far away as Venice.

Once the merchant ships docked in the ports, the merchandise was taken to official custody. The security of the merchandise was guaranteed by the administration and taxes levied on all items sold. Traders of Arabs, Persians, Guzerates and Khorassanians settled in Calicut other ports of west coast. They were conducting thriving foreign trade business.

The principal exports were pepper, ginger, cinnamon, cardamom, myrobalan, tamarind, timber, anafistula, precious and, semi-precious stones, pearls, musk, ambergris, rhubarb, aloe, cotton cloth and porcelain. Chief imports were copper, quicksilver (mercury), vermilion, coral, saffron, coloured velvets, rose water, knives, coloured camlets, gold and silver from Palestine. Horses were imported from Persia to Kannur and other ports of West coast. Silk was imported from China and sugar from Bengal.

## **The South Konkan Coastal Strip**

The long narrow strip of land lying between the Sahyadri Mountains and the western ocean known as Konkana, Haive, Tulu, Malayala (Malabar) came under the political and economic spheres of the Vijayanagara rulers. The whole region had been a hub of sea trade activities from the early centuries of the Christian era to the end of the sixteenth century. The entire coastal Karnataka and the Malabar region came under the influence of the sea trade activities of the Vijayanagara Empire (Panikkar 1929:12). The topic is studied in the following order—maritime activities, centers of trade activities, people involved in sea trade and their impact on the Karnataka and Malabar Coast.

The discovery of a sea route to India although opened the gates of India to the West precisely to Europe, thwarted the economic and commercial activities of the Vijayanagara Empire by snatching away its hold over the western (sea) trade. This warrants us to divide the study of Karnataka's Trans-Oceanic contacts during the Vijayanagara period into two heads namely, Pre-European and European periods. During the first period, native merchants, the others drawn from various countries of the Middle East, the East Coast of Africa, and the traders from Southeast Asia carried on trade with India in general and Karnataka in particular. The succeeding period saw certain drastic changes. The Arabs and the Moors were displaced by the European gun power over the high seas resulting in the European dominance over the Indian trade in general and Karnataka in particular.

The sea trade policies of the Vijayanagara rulers are revealed in the Telugu work *Amuktamalyada*, a work supposed to have been written by Emperor Krishnaraya himself (1509-1529 CE). It says "A king should improve the harbours of his country and to encourage its commerce. The horses, elephants and other articles are freely exported. He should arrange that foreign sailors who land in his country are looked after in manner suitable to their nationalities (Ashin Das Gupta et. Al 1987:117).

Foreign literary evidences have proved beyond doubt the existence of Karnataka's Trans-Oceanic contacts almost from the commencement of the Christian era. Mangalore (Nittira), Barakuru (Hangara katte), Basaruru, Udiyavara (Malpe) and Honnavara were major port-towns of the time. Besides, there were a host of minor port towns. Major share of Karnataka's Foreign Trade was through these port towns, which flourished all through the year because of the vast and rich hinter-lands. All major early dynasties of Karnataka including the Hoysalas got very good benefit out of this and bequeathed a fine heritage to the Vijayanagara Empire. The Tulunadu region where in the Alupas were ruling was divided in two provinces and they were called Mangalore, Barkur and these places functioned as regional capital of the

regional province of the same name.

The southern taluks of Uttara Kannada were brought under Vijayanagara rule soon after the establishment of the empire in the year 1336 CE. Buchanan speaks of Dakshina Kannada being under the control of the empire from that year with the help of records in the possession of one village accountant at Barkur.

A record of 1348 CE from Idagunji speaks of *Mahapradhana Maleya Dannayaka* having control over the region. This Maleya or Mallayya Dandanayaka was the governor in Dakshina Kannada, as evidenced by records ranging between 1353 and 1365 CE from that district. The Kadambas of Chandavar resisted Vijayanagar rule. Emperor Harihara's brother Marappa invaded Uttara Kannada and subdued the Kadamba in 1347 CE. Marappa also visited Gokarn in the same year. The record (EC. VIII, SK 375) states that Marappa was administering Banavasi-12,000 country from Chandragutti in Shimoga district. Later, Uttara Kannada appears to have been brought under the general administrative supervision of Madhava Mantri as indicated by record from Banavasi of 1368 CE. He later conquered Goa in 1378CE from the Bahmanis. It is likely that parts of Uttara Kannada like Ankola and Karwar taluks were perhaps under the Bahmanis before they were conquered by the Vijayanagara Empire and Goa continued to be under Vijayanagara till 1472 CE when Mahamud Gawan, the minister of the Bahmani prince Muhammad I (CE1358-75) conquered it. Madhava Mantri is described as the governor of Banavasi-12,000 in two records from Banavasi, issued respectively in 1368-69 CE and 1387 CE. He is described as having his headquarters in Gova nagara long before, Vijayanagara appointed a governor in the district with Honnavara as the headquarters. Nagarasa Odeya appointed as the first governor from Honnavara, under Harihara II in 1378 CE. Several governors of Vijayanagara ruled the Honnavara Rajya up to 1438 CE.

During the first half of Vijayanagara rule, the local princes appear to have resisted imperial authority, But, Vijayanagara monarchs succeeded in keeping these revolting feudatories under control. Almost all records of the feudatories, like Haduvalli, Sonda, Bilgi or Gersoppa, mention the Vijayanagara Emperors as their overlords. The rulers of Sode continue to acknowledge Vijayanagara overlord ship even till 1611 CE when Emperor Venkata II (1584-1614 CE) was ruling from Chandragiri in Andhra Pradesh. One record of the Bilgi ruler, connected with the construction of the Ratnatraya Basadi at Bilgi also mentions Venkata II.

The governors administering the district from Honnavara are described in many of their records as they looking after Haive, Tulu and Konkana. It is difficult to ascertain now how these territories were demarcated. But, if Buchanan is to be believed, territory in the south till Bhatkal was Tuluva and its highway pass from Bhatkal to the Gangavali through Haive (Haiga). Konkana was the territory to the north of the Gangavali. Perhaps, the three *chavadis* spoken of as under the governor of Honnavara in one record of 1427 CE might mean these three subdivisions.

## The Horse Trade

The empire of Vijayanagara extended its sway over the coastal region almost immediately after its inception. Its hold over the region was very strong which is vouchsafed by the discovery of a very large number of inscriptions which start appearing almost from 1345 CE itself. The earliest epigraph is from Attavara, Mangalore dated 1345 CE January 17 (*SII, Vol., VII.No.179*) records the rule of *Mahamandaleswara* Bukkanna Odeya (Bukka I) and to Sankaradeva Odeya the governor the Mangalore *rajya*. This indicates that immediately after the occupation of coastal Karnataka or Tulu Nadu it was divided into two provinces namely Mangalore and Barakuru *rajya* and governors were appointed. This political arrangement by the kings of Vijayanagara had a military purpose. Dr. K. V. Ramesh thinks that the rulers of Vijayanagara could

hope to build up a formidable cavalry only with the help of horses imported from Arabia and for this they needed suitable ports. "It is not unlikely that South Kanara which possessed such ports in Mangalore and Barakuru, was annexed into the empire on this account"( Ramesh 1970:150-151).

The rulers of Vijayanagara hope to build up a formidable cavalry only with the help of horses imported from Arabia. South Kanara and North Canara had possessed such ports. Thus they had developed this region as the directly administered region and the coastal Karnataka had converted as the regional administrative units namely Mangaluru. Brakarur, Tuluva, Haive, and Konkan. Mangaluru and Barakur functioned as the regional provincial capitals of the *Rajyas* of respective names. Honnavara or Suvernapura was the regional capital of the Tuluva, Haive, and Konkan provinces. These provinces were ruled by the Governor appointed by the King. Under these provinces Mangaluru, Barkuru, Basarur, Honnavara and Bhatkal functioned as the main ports of the Karnataka coast during Vijayanagara period. In all these ports Arab settlements were noticed by the travelers and the evidenced by the inscriptions.

Timmanna-Odeya, the governor of Mangaluru-*rajya* involved in an affair with the *Hanjamana*. The inscription (SII, Vol VII, No.391) which records this incident belongs to 1418 CE and narrates that, while they were conducting themselves in accordance with established rules and custom, Timmanna, for no reason attacked the *Hanjamana* with his soldiers and took away four or five villages which were under their jurisdiction. This news reached the ears of the emperor. Through the general and Bayicha-*dannayaka*, the king instructed Timmanna Odeya to offer reparations to the suffering *Hanjamana*.

In 1428 CE, Timmanna-Odeya, the then governor of Mangaluru-*rajya*, held discussions with his *pradhanis* and also with the local rulers before taking a decision beneficial to the *Hanjamanas* subsequent to his

actions against them (*SII Vol VII, No. 259*). Another inscription (*SII Vol., IX, Part II, No. 459*) from Basaruru, Coondapur Taluk, dated May, 1465 CE records that the *Hanjamanas* of Basaruru being unable to pay their taxes to the palace in gold, they surrendered their harvest and that the gold earned by the sale of this harvest was gifted to the god Mahadeva of Paduvakiri in Basaruru by Pandarideva-Odeya, the governor of Barakuru rajya.

Timmanna- Odeya was governing, from his headquarters at Honnavara, the Haive, Tulu and Konkana *rajyas* (*KI, Vol. I, Nos. 35- 36*). It is then stated that a serious breach having occurred between the governor and one Ummaramarakala, who was the chief of the *Hanjamana* of Honnavara Ummara- marakala along with his supporters, retired to Kasaragodu (a village in the North Kanara District) and appealed to Mahamandalesvara Sanigiraya- Odeya, the chief of Nagire, to use his good offices and bring about the end of hostilities against him by Timmanna Odeya. On hearing this appeal, Sanigiraya Odeya dispatched one Kotisvara Nayaka, along with a thousand soldiers, to offer protection to Ummara Marakala and his followers. The inscription tells us that, at this stage, Timmanna Odeya deceitfully (*mosadim*) laid siege to Kasarakodu and started harassing the womenfolk of Ummara Marakala's camp. Rising to the occasion, Kotisvara Nayaka shifted the members of the *Hanjamana*, including Ummara Marakala and the women folk, with the help of boats to a place of safety. In the battle which ensued on this account with the forces of Timmanna Odeya, Kotisvara Nayaka fought valiantly but was killed. From the above, it may be concluded that the Nagire chiefs were powerful enough to question the acts of imperial officers (*KI, Vol. I, Nos- 35-36*).

Popular trade centers like Barakur, Basarur and Mudabidre had their trade or merchant guilds called *Nakhara* (or *Nagara, Nakara, Sarnasta-nakhara, Nagara-sarnfiha* etc). Settikara and the *Hanjamana*, also referred to as the *Nakhara Hanjamana*. The term *Nakhara*, could have derived from Sanskrit *Nagara*, is to be understood in the sense of 'merchant community' or 'guild of merchants' or 'a mercantile town'... The word *Nagara* also

occurs in these senses in Tamil inscriptions (Ramesh 1970: 252ff).

The term *Settikara* also stands for the same term as given above and the name is derived from the word *Setti* meaning a merchant or trader. Though the exact differences of these two groups namely *Nakhara* and *Settikara* are not known in view of the explanation of Hanjamana it may be suggested the *Settikara* was the association of native merchants who dealt in indigenous commodities and the *Nakhara* was the guild of native merchants who were concerned with overseas trade.

The origin of *Hanjamana* has been convincingly traced to the Avestic *Hanjamana* and Persian *anjuman* and taken to mean the settlement of the Parsees (*Ind. Ant. Vol. XLI, pp. 173-176*). D.C. Sircar feels that there is little possibility of the reference to Hanjamana in South Canara inscriptions being to Parsee settlements in that district and that, therefore, *Hanjamana* should be understood in the sense of *panchavanna* of the lexicons, the same as Tamil *Anjuvannam* (Sanskrit: *Pahcha-varna*) meaning the five artisan classes viz., the goldsmiths, black smiths, brass workers, carpenters and stone-masons (*Ep. Ind. Vol. XXXV, pp 291ff*). This fivefold expansion, which holds good for *Anjuvannam*, is not found so explained in any available record for the term *Hanjamana*. On the other hand, the Avestan and Persian origin for *Hanjamana* stands vindicated by the fact that "the Arabian Sea, a vast expanse separating the two peninsulas of India and Arabia and bounded on the north by the barren coastline of Persia, is one of the vital seas of the world. As a result of the seasonal monsoon, it has been for at least 3000 years a great highway of commerce and intercourse. The Indians and the Phoenicians, the Arabhs in fact all the seafaring nations of the East have considered this to be the chief area of navigation." (Panikkar 1929: 59).

A copper-plate record dated Saka 1312 (1390 CE), found in possession of the Humcha Matha, Nagara Taluk, Shimoga district deserves our attention in exploring the sea trade activities of the residents of the Vijayanagara Empire. It says that, Aja Sahu; the son of Rhoja

Sangho, started his voyage from Malaya, passed through *Kambhuja*, crossed over the islands including Lanka, proceeded up to Gujarat and finally landed in coastal town of *Borakurtu* (Barkur). He settled there after his long sea voyage. The copper-plate enables us to know that Mahamadans (Muslims) and *Marakala* (*Marakayar* a Muslim sect that lives in Thoothukudi region of Tamil Nadu coast) took interest in the sea voyage. However, the inscription is silent about the size of his ship and its capacity.

Similarly, the term *Naviga Prabhu*, mentioned in an inscription<sup>5</sup>, found at Sorab and it is quite interesting. It seems his headquarters was at Mangaluru (Mangalore). Probably he was in charge of the sea voyage. But we are not in a position to ascertain whether he was the head of a naval fleet or was merely a chief merchant. *Hikayat Maharaja* one of the Malayan Chronicles tells us that the sea captain of the Deccan arrived at Malaya. The captain hailed from Vijayanagara, the capital of the Deccan. Two boys accompanied him. They were asked to guard his ship while captain was feasting at places. Again, we are informed in another Malayan Chronicle that Iskander, the prophet of Khadar, conducted sea voyage to China and returned to Vijayanagara. Thus, the above sources confirm that the merchants often involved in the maritime activities from the ports of Vijayanagara Empire.

The overseas trade had already established its importance in building the sound economy of the empire. Pepper, Spices, Ginger, Rice, Sugar, Teak and Iron ore were some of the important commodities exported from Karnataka. The Arab merchants, travelers and geographers knew this region, along with its ports very well. They provide us a vivid account of the west coast stretching between Malabar and Konkan (Nainar 1942 ; Sastri 1939). The Moors brought good horses, which were in great demand here. The writings of Ibn Battuta and Duarte Barbosa besides others, also testify it. It is thus clear that the annexations of the West Coast of Karnataka by the Vijayanagara received priority for the sake of importing good horses from Arabia for fulfilling the imperial



military needs besides ensuing the building of a trouble-free zone for the economic development of the empire (*Bombay Gazetteer. Vol.XV. Pt. II. Kanara*).

## People involved in sea trade

The study of epigraphs and foreign sources gives an impression that the Muslims took active interest in the maritime trade activities of the West coast. They linked the Ocean and seas with land. Their associations known as *Hanjamanas*, Nakara *Hanjamanas* often figured in a few inscriptions on the coastal towns of Ullala (near Mangalore), Mangalore, Barakuru, Basruru, Bhatkal, and Gove (Goa). With the conquest of Gove (Goa) port by the Vijayanagara ruler, the Hanjaman trade there was restricted. It may be due to its proximity with the Bahmani kingdom.

In this context, the mention of *Hanjamana Mukhya* in Kaikini inscription dated CE 1427 (KI-I: No. 48) is worth mentioning. Besides the *Hanjamanas*, other associations namely *Nanadesi*, and *Ubhya Nanadesi* and *Paradesi* figured in inscriptions seem to have engaged themselves in sea trade. The Tulu folk songs often mention *Tandels* who were headmen of sailors. They received salaries from the owner of the cargo or ship. Fishermen were prominent sea farers. They were low caste Hindus and operated off the coast. As hereditary sailors, the fishermen appear some time to have taken service as Seamen (*Ashin Das Gupta 1987: 147*).

Inscriptions found in the region especially which refers to trade centers of the region informs us of the existence of various types of merchant guilds which carried on both foreign and inland trade. *Settis*, *Settikaras*, *Halaru*, *Halaru-Settikararu* etc., are common guilds found in the inscriptions of Barakuru, Udiyavara, Basaruru, Bainduru, Karkala, Venuru Mangaluru etc. Nakhara is another commonly found guild in most of the inscriptions. Besides these there were the *Balanhju*, *Nanadesi*, *Ubhaya-Nanadesi*, *Gavare* and *Hanjamana*. Each one represents a different category of trade and commercial-activities. However, *Nanadesi*, *Ubhaya-*

*Nanadesi* and the *Hanjamana* represent special categories of merchants. The first two namely *Nanadesi*, *Ubhaya-Nanadesi*, were the native, but represent a group of merchants mostly drawn from different regions of the land with more commercial rights and privileges; whereas the *Hanjamana*s represent the group of foreign merchants drawn mostly from Arabia and Persia.

According to Nilakantha Sastri "the *nanadesis* were powerful autonomous corporations of merchants whose activities apparently took little or no account of political boundaries" (Nilakantha Sastri 1935: 597). It is thus, clear that these people conducted trade activities in all countries. The prefix *ubhaya* may signify two *nanadesi* guilds denoting *swadesi* (local) and *paradesi* (foreign) merchant communities (Ramesh 1970: 256). The Hiriyaṅgaḍi inscription of Lokanathadevarasa dated 1334 CE, has a reference to *ubhaya-nanadesigalu* who joined hands with *halaru* of Karkala, the king and his *Pradhani* in a granting the of income to god Santinathadeva of Gurugala basadi at Hiriyaṅgaḍi, a suburb of Karkala from the taxes levied on salt, pepper, ginger, gingili, paddy, rice etc., (*SII Vol. VII. No.2417*). This indicates *Ubhayananadesis* also participated in the local religious activities like other guilds.

In an inscription dated 1430 CE from Barakuru, there is reference to *Paradesi bevaharigalu* which denotes foreign merchants (*SII, Vol.VII. No.340*). This inscription records an agreement happened between the trading communities of *Murukeri* and *Chaulikeri* of Barakuru, contains a clause reserving a particular place (*thavu*) for the foreign merchants *paradesi-bevaharigalu* to store the loads of sugar which they purchased and brought from the land above the Ghats- *ghattada melaninda* (Ramesh 1970:262). This very clearly indicates the free of movement of the foreign merchants within Karnataka for procuring the commodity of their choice.

This kind of a free movement was very much required for both the foreign and Indian merchant guilds. It also indicates that the trade activity is not seasonal but it use to take place in all other seasons except the rainy

season and from the commencement of the shipping season they can continue the shipping activity over the Arabian Sea.

The Arab trade link with Karnataka is very ancient. They made an impact on local administration and on building the economic strength of the state through their long stay and the increased commercial activities (La Na Swamy 2014: 22-39). The inscription from *Naravi* provides us the earliest reference (CE 1200) to their commercial activities even in interior areas of the region and the Basaruru inscription provides us with a fine example for bringing them under the judicial control of the State (SII, Vol. IX. Pt. II No. 459). The purpose of the record and the content is worth mentioning in relation to the above statement. When the *Hanjamana* failed to pay the tax in time, the governor of Barakuru, Pandarideva Odeya made them pay an additional amount to the extent of 150 *kati gadyanas*. Accordingly, the *Hanjamana* paid the tax as directed by the governor. Apart from getting the information about the payment of this tax or fine amount to the government we do get information regarding the movement of cargo vessels to the Sea through the mouth of the river (Varahi) *Basarura* alive along with the list of cargo commodities, the levy and collection of tax. This indicates the existence of a kind of export duty.

The *Hanjamana* paid this tax to the government as *Palli-mariyade*. *Palli* means the residential quarters of the *Hanjamana* and there were number of *Pallis* all along the coast of Karnataka as evidenced by the epigraphs of this region. Each *Hanjamana* group had a *mukhya* (chief) Ummara Marakala figures in one of the inscriptions from Kaikini (KI I: No.48). Ramesh has analyzed the term *Hanjamana* means the mercantile community of the West living in the coastal towns of Karnataka and its activities in his doctoral thesis (Ramesh 1970:252- 254). Further while he analyzing the name of *Ummara marakala* of the Kaikini inscription dated CE 1427 says that *Ummara* was a Persian proper name, which is the same as *Umara* and *marakala* means a sailor (*Ibid*). He says that the information of the inscription and the inferences drawn on the fact supports the

view that *Hanjamana* was a foreign trading guild of the merchants of Arabia and Persia who settled all along the West coast (*Ibid*: 253-54). The writings of Ibn Batuta also testifies to the existence of foreign Muslim merchants at Honnavara dealing in horses (Nainar:1942).

Mudabidure, the famous center of Jaina religious pilgrimage center, was under the direct administration of the Vijayanagara governor of Mangaluru rajya. It developed as an important marketing place where both local and foreign commodities were exchanged. It seems that the merchants of this place had very good contacts with Egypt, the Middle East, Southeast Asia and China.

The record dated 1430 CE informs us the consecration of the image of god Chandranatha in the basadi built newly by the people and merchant guilds who were the disciples of the Jaina guru Charukirti Panditadeva of Venu Pura (*SII, Vol. No. 196*).

The merchant guilds, both native and foreign, living in the city of Barakuru played an important role in shaping the economy of the state. Barakuru was the headquarters of a province of the Vijayanagara Empire called the Barakuru-rajya. The guilds had enjoyed the autonomous status and the same has been recognized by the imperial authority. Even though there are occasions, that the guilds working against the central authority by trespassing the norms. The inscriptions found in this region have proved this.

Honnavara was an important Port-town and also the headquarters of the governor of the Vijayanagara Empire. As testified by Ibn Battuta, the Moors brought in large numbers very good horses from Arabia to this port. It is situated on the northern banks of the river Saravati. The village of Kasarakodu is situated overlooking Honnavara on the Southern banks of the river Saravati. The mouth of the river could thus be safeguarded very well from both the places.

Kaikini inscription of 1427 CE states that the nakhara and *Hanjamana* were up in arms against the governor of Honnavara Timmanna-Odeya and thereby invited an attack against them by the imperial forces (K.I.I, No.48). Ramesh writes: "It is then stated that a serious breach having occurred between the governor and one *Ummara-marakala* who was the chief of the *Hanjamana* of Honnavara, the latter along with his supporters. retired to Kasarkodu -a village in the North Kanara District and appealed to *Mahamandalesvara* Sangiraya Odeya, the chief of Nagire, to use his good offices and bring about the cessation of hostilities against him by Timmanna Odeya" (Ramesh 1970:196).

The local officers of the imperial power often checked the power and unlawful acts of the merchant guilds. Two such instances may be quoted here. Mahabaladeva, the governor of Barakuru Rajya took away all the conventional status of the guilds including that of the *Hanjamana* of Barakuru for which the reasons not specified. Later on, the guilds probably appealed to the emperor Bukka II to restore their rights. Accordingly, the emperor restored their rights which is reflected in an inscription from Barakuru dated 1405 CE (SII, Vol. VII No.349). Sometime later, Timmanna-Odeya, the governor of Mangaluru rajya attacked the *Hanjamana* and laid captured some villages them which were under their control (Ramesh 1970:165). According to an inscription from Mangalore dated 1418 CE the *Hanjamana* were later on given justice through proper compensation (SII, Vol. VII No. 82).

The port city of Mangalore was the headquarters of an Imperial naval Officer called *navigada prabhu* which means Lord of Ships. The term *Naviga Prabhu*, mentioned in an inscription (Saletore 1934:58-72), found at Sorab and it is quite interesting. Probably he was in charge of the sea voyage. But we are not in a position to ascertain whether he was the head of a naval fleet or was merely a chief merchant. This inference on this issue is basis on the information referred in an inscription of Soraba and he further says that it is not possible to say if this officer was head of a naval fleet or was merely the chief of merchant ships (Ramesh 1970:265-66).

Possibly he must have been an imperial officer stationed at the busy port city of Mangalore for keeping a watch on the movements and activities of all foreigners including the foreign merchant guilds. As a part of their duty the *navigada-prabhus* must have been sending confidential reports regularly to the emperor and local governors.

Further, we are yet to know about the role played by the *Bhandasales* that existed during the Vijayanagara period. They were 'store houses' of various types of commodities located in large number on the banks of rivers and by the side of the highways. The bhandasales were the liaison centers between the port towns and the hinter-lands. They acted as the hubs of commercial activities of the various guilds. One can surmise that these centers acted as wholesale trade centers. A fresh study of inscriptions of Barakuru and Basaruru in particular and Honnavara, Bhatkal, Haduvalli, Bainduru, Udiyavara, Mangaluru, Mudabidure and Karkala in general, will reveal the correct information regarding the type and nature of establishment and activities of *Bhandasales* and the type of control that the imperial authority had on them.

A copper-plate record dated Saka 1312 (1390 CE), found in possession of the Humcha Matha Nagara Taluk, Shimoga district deserves our attention in exploring the sea trade activities of the residents of the Vijayanagara Empire. It says that Aja Sahu; the son of Rhoja Sangho, started his voyage from Malaya, passed through Kambhuja, crossed over the islands including Lanka, proceeded up to Gujarat and finally landed in coastal town of Borakurtu. He settled there after his long sea voyage. The copper-plate enables us to know that Mahamadans (Muslims) and Marakala (Marakayar a Muslim sect that lives in Tuttukudi region of Tamil Nadu coast) took interest in the sea voyage. However, the inscription is silent about the size of his ship and its capacity.

*Hikayat Maharaja* one of the Malayan Chronicles tells us that the sea captain of the Deccan arrived at Malaya. The captain hailed from Vijayanagara, the capital of the Deccan. Two boys accompanied him.

They were asked to guard his ship while captain was feasting at places. Again we are informed in another Malayan Chronicle that Iskander, the prophet of Khadar, conducted sea voyage to China and returned to Vijayanagara (Saletore 1956:66). Thus, the above sources confirm that the merchants often involved in the maritime activities from the ports of Vijayanagara Empire.

## **Centers of Maritime Activities**

One of the striking features of the Vijayanagara rule on west coast is that the region turned into a trade province and many big and small ports developed there. The ports and their guilds often engaged themselves in the sea trade activities. One such port to be noticed was Gove bandar (port) known as Raibander (Desai et.al.: 1970: 385). From 1367 to 1472 CE the port had been an emporium of Vijayanagara Empire and the gate way of lucrative trade with western world and important center of traffic for imported horses. From 1406 onwards the Sultan of the Bahamani used to send annually vessels to Gove and Chaul to procure many manufactures and production from all parts of the world (Appadorai II:1991:591). The port had trade connection with the Malabar and coastal Karnataka coastal towns. At the same time, it is to be remembered that the traders in Malabar and its neighboring region Kanara had sea trade contacts with merchants in the Gove port (*Ibid*).

The port was an island surrounded by deep sea calm water under all winds, well stocked with provisions and livestock. It had much hay for horses and wide room for security. Consequently many ships of the Moors, came here from Mecca, the city of Aden, Ormuz, Cambay and Malabar (Sherwani et. Al.,:1971:304)

Mangalore, Barakuru, Basrur, Bhatkal, Honnavar and Mirjan very often figured as sea trade centres along coastal Karnataka. From the sixteenth century onwards, Canarcota (Kasargod), Kumbala, Manjesvara, Uliala Karnate (Mulki), Baindur, Engropa (Gersappa) and Ankola

emerged as sea trade center as known from the records. All these ports had trans-oceanic trade contacts with Arabia, Africa even distant China and Southeast Asia. In support of this, we have the evidence of local versions. For example, the local version gathered at Basrur mentions the arrival of ships of different sizes from China to the Basrur port for the purchase of sugar cane, ginger and rice. These ships usually arrived annually in the month of *Ashada*. In the course of the voyage, one of the Chinese sailors ridiculed *Panjurli Daiva* the local deity of the region. It is said that the Daiva became furious and in a fit of anger, sunk the Chinese ship. The sailor ridiculed became a *Buta*, an attendant *Daivas* of *Panjurli*. Honnavara, Bhatkal and Mangalore had sea trade contacts with Arabia, Persia, Ormuz and Yemen. Agrarian products such as ginger, coconuts, pepper, Spices, sugarcanes of various variety were exported on ships owned by the Moor traders to the other side of the Arabian sea (Tome Fires:1944 I: 61). Meanwhile, the local traditional accounts states that Mangalore had sea trade contacts with China. For example, *Sharabhu Ganpati Mahime* informs us that the Chinese ships laden with gold mixed soil, which was in great demand in the Mangalore region, used to arrive at the port (Nage Gowda 1966 II: 101-103).

Barakuru, another emporium of sea trade in the Vijayanagara Empire, attracted foreign traders and they settled there and their settlements are known in the inscriptions as *Paradesi*. Two inscriptions dated 1430 CE (*SII:VII:Nos.309&340*) prescribe regulations for the sale of sugar brought by the local and foreign traders. Further, these records state that the spices sold in the port came from beyond Ghats.

The professional tactful traders residing in Bhatkal enriched the prosperity of trade in that port. This is mentioned in an inscription dated 1547 CE found in the same place (*KI: III pt.1, No.14*). Ships used to come to Bhatkal port from Arabia, Persia, Ormuz and Malabar. The port had a great traffic in goods or diverse sorts (Barbosa:I: 166, 185, 215, 303).



## **Ships of Different Names**

The names mentioned in the Tulu folk and Kannada works are *Hai Hadagu*, *Pai Doni*, *kallada (Kadala) Padvu* (sea going Ship) *Marada Padavu*, etc. The *Bobbariya Padadanan* (SII: IX, II, No, 620; *Ibid*: VII: No. 366) provides information on the construction of ships and boats, naval fights and ships wreckson the shore. The same *Padadana* says that with the active help and cooperation of several *Marakals*, Boris and Muslim communities, the brothers of Sobbariya built ship which had seven decks, an office for business, and a hold for *keru* and *Haravu* planks. They fastened with the ropes and stacked straight a small mast (B.A. Saletore: I: 1936: 483).

## **Malabar Coast and Vijayanagara**

Prior to the establishment of the Vijayanagara Empire, the Malayala Veddbehavari conducted trans-oceanic trade in Karnataka along with others. This is known from the study of inscriptions (Dikshit1964: 136) found in the districts Belgaum, Bijapur, Dharwad and Hassan in Karnataka. One of the inscriptions dated 1255 describes *kulamukhanagara* (Kudangaluru, near Kochi) as mirror to the face Lakshmi of Kerala country. Further, the same epigraph informs us that in that city a rich merchant Junje Setti, the Chief of *Nanadesi* of *Malayala* resided and he had done remarkable services in the court of the Hoysala ruler Naraslmha (*EC: V: Arsikere: No. 108*).

From the foundation of the Vijayanagara Empire, the trade transactions in coastal Karnataka expanded and its repercussions were seen in the Malabar region. Along with Kodungallur the ports like Kozhikode, Ponnani, and Tiruvaruru ports witnessed the activities of the Virashaiva traders from the Vijayanagara and it is known from *Shivatattva chintamani* composed by Lakkanna dandesha (Basappa1960:9, Sandhi 35, 38: 318,400-404).

It is curious to note that these merchants of the Vijayanagara were involved in preaching Virashaiva doctrine in the ports of Kerala. From the latter half of the fifteenth century onwards, the sea trade in Malabar saw a great stride. The trade of the Vijayanagara ports increased. Precious stones and certain amount of pepper were carried by convoys of oxen to Vijayanagara. The Malabar had to depend upon the Vijayanagara Empire because the region was facing agricultural difficulties. Consequently, the ports in coastal Karnataka namely Mirjan, Honnavara, Bhatkal, Basrur, Barakuru, Mangalore, Kumbala (Kumble) welcomed the crafts of the Malabari merchants loaded with coconut palm, oil and wine. The ships from Malabar used to take black rice, coconut coir, and other products from the ports in Karnataka (*Barbosa: 185-191, 193-197*).

Another factor contributed for the expansion of the sea trade in Malabar was that the Vijayanagara rulers depended on war horses from Arabia. The ports namely Dharmapattana and Kannur (Cannanore) and Kallikote (Kozhikode) gained prominence as sea trade centres. For instance, Kannur along with Bhatkaland Honnavara provided cavalry replacement for the Vijayanagara. It is certain that the merchants of Kannur in Ormuz negotiated the war horses for the empire (*Ashin Das Gupta 1987: 167*).

Thus, the overseas trade in Malabar and the coastal Karnataka gained a new dimension in the Vijayanagara period. The Vijayanagara trade policies gained new resources to coastal Karnataka and Malabar areas. The increased sea trade in the Vijayanagara period had impact on gaining new resources to the above regions. It is said that the trade resources enabled these regions to turn into political assets (*Stein 1994: 74-75*). The Mapillas sea trade activities widened in the Kasargod and Mangalore regions, where they achieved monopoly of sea trade with Maldives and other Islands. In influx of the traders from Malabar poured into the ports of Karnataka. Thus ethnic migrations followed and it was the result of the trade policies of the Vijayanagara rulers.

During the early medieval period, as many as eight Arab travelers visited this place and have left graphic accounts of the maritime activities of the coastal strip in general. These accounts give a strong impression about the presence of Arab merchants in the coastal region since 9th century CE (Gazetteer, South Kanara 1973: 36) and speak highly of *Balhara* rulers (Rashtrakutas) who maintained very cordial relationship with the Muslims, obviously for commercial advantages. The entire western coastal strip up to Konkan is named as *Malibar* or *Manibar* by these Arab merchants. Their description mentions the location of the port-towns, the commodities that were traded in, the hinter lands supplying these commodities and the natural scenario of the ports. All of them pointedly refer to the production of good quality teak. Diminisqui (CE 1323) mentions that *Manibar* adjoins *Hunnur* (Honnavar) and it is named as the 'country of pepper'. Ibn Batuta (CE 1359) refers to Honnavara and testifies to the fact of its prosperity through trade and commerce (Swamy 2000:70-86).

The epigraphs of the period also throw ample light on the then contemporary trade activity (Visweswara 2010:93-104). The famous mercantile organisation of *Ayyavole* (*Ibid*) claims in a record of 1150 CE that they procured for kings many costly materials through water and land routes (*Jalasthala vitras*). Another specific illustration is that of a certain Kammatachetti, a royal merchant of the Hoysala king Viraballala II (1173-1220 CE (*Ibid*) who procured for the king horses, elephants and pearls. In the succeeding centuries a large number of European travelers (*Ibid*) visited the region. Their accounts are really valuable in assessing the economic prosperity achieved through brisk maritime trade that the coastal strip witnessed during the 15<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries CE

A variety of good quality war horses (*Yamani*, *Shami*, *Bahri*, etc) were regularly imported from Arab and Persian countries during the Vijayanagara period. Though Bhatkal came to limelight during this period, Ankola, Mirjan and Honnavara also continued to be the chief ports. To have direct control over the region and to centralize the horse

trade through these ports as also to effectively check the menace of the ever-increasing piracy, the Vijayanagara kings established new territorial divisions like *Barakuru-vishaya* (*Rajya*), *Honnavaara-vishaya*, etc and trusted officials were put in charge of them (Chidananda Murthy 1979:377). The *Honnavaara-vishaya* comprised three divisions (*rajyas*), Haive, Tuluva and Konkana respectively covering the territory in the south up to Bhatkal, from Bhatkal to Gangavali and the area below Gangavali. The places had regular administrative office (*chavadi*) established obviously for the effective political and economic control over the trade activities.

Fernao Nuniz whose name is inseparably linked with the history of the Vijayanagara empire, who was himself a horse dealer, remarks that "(The king) caused horses to be brought from Oromuz (Persia) and Adeen (Aden) into his kingdom and thereby gave great profit to the merchants, paying them for the horses just as they asked. The king every year buys thirteen thousand horses of Oromuz, and country-breds, of which he chooses the best for his own stables, and he gives the rest to his captains." (Narasimha Murthy 1997:111-118) It is interesting to note in this connection that Krishnadevaraya in his *Amuktamalyada* (Visweswara 2010:93-104) urges to improve the harbours and port-towns of the kingdom so that imports of various articles.

## Trade Routes

The rise of the Hoysalas in southern Karnataka give rise to the shift of financial power politics of the southern region of their empire which was bordering the Malabar Coast. The defeat of the Chandalvas and the Kongalvas who had sway over the hilly region of the southern Karnataka which encompassed Udakamandala and Coorg. This has opened the Malabar Coast to the Hoysalas and that became the prime trade route of the region which connected the Imperial Chola regional capital called Rajarajapura or Mahanagara Talakadu and Kozhikode. This trade route passed through Kozhikode-Kalpetta-Mananthavadi Heggadadevanakote-Hunasuru-Kannambadi-Holenarasipura-Hasana

-Dorasamudra. The same route at Heggadadevanakote takes a diversion to Hullahalli-Nanjanagudu- Suttur- T. Narasipura -Talakadu- Vyasarayapura- Bannur- Srirangapattana and there linking the high ways connecting to Mangalore, Bengaluru and Chitradurga. Further this trade route continued to connect Maddur -Magadi- Kunigal- Tumkur – Sira Hemavati.

During the period many port cities were connected to the Malnad and at the same time to the plain land. The trade routes that connected the Karnataka port cities are as follows:

## **The Southern Routes**

The harbour Mangalore is connected to the up Ghats via - Uppinangady - Belthangady - further moving along the Netravati River reaching Angadi-Mudigere- Chikmagalur finally reaching Dorasamudra. The tack between Belthangady and Angadi via Samse and Belthangady to Dorasamudra on the other way were of great difficult and the commodities should be moved only on the backs of the animal force that were used for the purpose or as the head load of men.

The harbour Mangalore is connected to the up Ghats via - Uppinangady - Belthangady - further moving along the Netravati River reaching Angadi-Mudigere- Chikmagalur finally reaching Dorasamudra. The tack between Belthangady and Angadi via Samse and Belthangady to Dorasamudra on the other way were of great difficult and the commodities should be moved only on the backs of the animal force that were used for the purpose or as the head load of men.

The other route which connected the malnad from Mangalore pass through Uppinangady along the river route from their via Kanyady-Subramanya-Sakaleshapura it used to reach Dorasumadra.

The third route starting from Mangalore passing through Panemangalore Bantwala along the river route from there Karinja-Punjalakatte-Ujire Sisileswara -Subramanya- Sakaleshapura and it used to reach Dorasumadra. Some merchants march up to Uppinangady and took Ujire route from there to reach Dorasamudra.

The route from Udiyavara near Udupi used to pass through - Barkur- Karkala- Uppinangady- Sakaleshapura it used to reach Dorasumadra.

The other route from Udiyavara near Udupi used to pass through -Barkur -Karkala -Agumbe -Sringeri -N R Pura -Mudigere-Belure- and used to reach Dorasumadra.

Another route from Udiyavara near Udupi used to pass through -Barkur -Karkala -Bajagoli -Sringeri -Koppa -Tirthahalli-Shivamogga -Kudligi- and used to reach Vijayanagara.

## **The Northern Routes**

The other route starting from the regional coastal region capital of Vijayanagara Empire namely Basarur pass through - Shankarayana -Haladi -Siddapura -Hosaangadi -Sagara and further it reaches Shivamogga from there it reaches to Vijayanagara.

The route starting from Kundapura pass through -Bhatkal - Gerusoppa -Mavinangundi -Siddapura-Sirasi Banavasi -Sagara-Shimogga and further it reaches Vijayanagara.

The another route starting from Kundapura pass through-Hosaangadi -Nagara -Tirthalalli -Shimogga -Kudligi -Honnali-Ukkadagatri -Harihara -Mylara -Mundaragi -Koppala and further it reaches Vijayanagara.

The route starting from Honnavara pass through Shirasi –Siddapura –Chandragutti –Banavasi -Akkialur –Hanagul – Bankapura - Yalavige –Shirahatti -Mundaragi –Koppala and further it reaches Vijayanagara.

The route starting from Gokarna pass through –Kumata – Shirasi –Hanagallu-Savanur -Gadag –Itagi - Koppala and further it reaches Vijayanagara.

The route starting from Ankola pass through Yallapur –Haliyala –Dharawad –Annigeri - Gadag –Itagi - Koppala and further it reaches Vijayanagara.

## Sculptural Evidences

There is a representation of boat in the Ramayana narrative panels of Sri Ramachandra temple at Hampi, (Dallapiccola:1992.). The panel also represents the sequence of Rama crossing the river Ganga along with Sita and Lakshmana (Fig: 1). The boat depicted here is very different from other Ramayana panels, which represent the boat so far noticed. This particular craft resembles the Caracals a skin boat locally known as Harigolu.



Figure.1. Hampi, Hajararama temple; Rama crossing the river Ganga along with Sita and Lakshmana in a coracle.

Recently, two more representation of boats was identified on the foundation of a structure located in Zenana enclosure or Lotus Mahal Complex. To the west of Lotus mahal, there is a water pavilion; in the south west corner of the foundation of this water pavilion two boats which are in the act of piracy are depicted (Fig: 2).

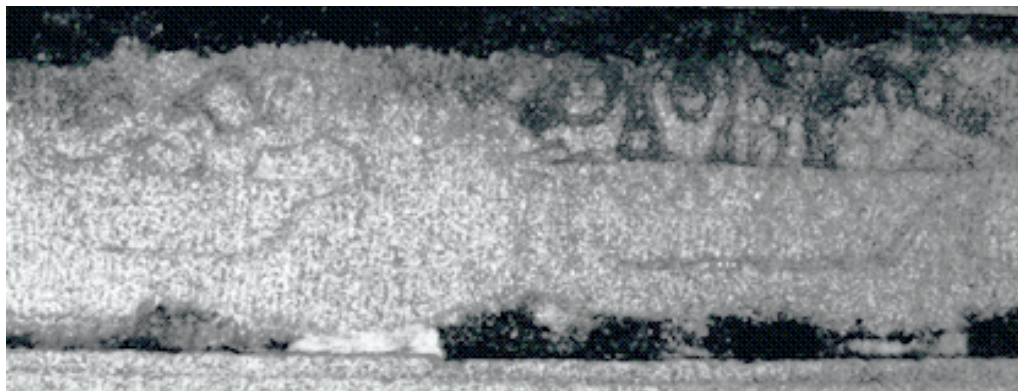


Figure.2.Hampi, Lotus Mahal Complex; a panel depicting the capturing of ship by a group of people.

In the southern face of the adhistana of the structure there is a panel depicting the capturing of ship by a group of people who are also sailing in a smaller boat when compared to the other (Fig: 3). In all probability it may represent the capturing of the Portuguese boats which might have entered the port without permission in to the one of the ports of west coast.

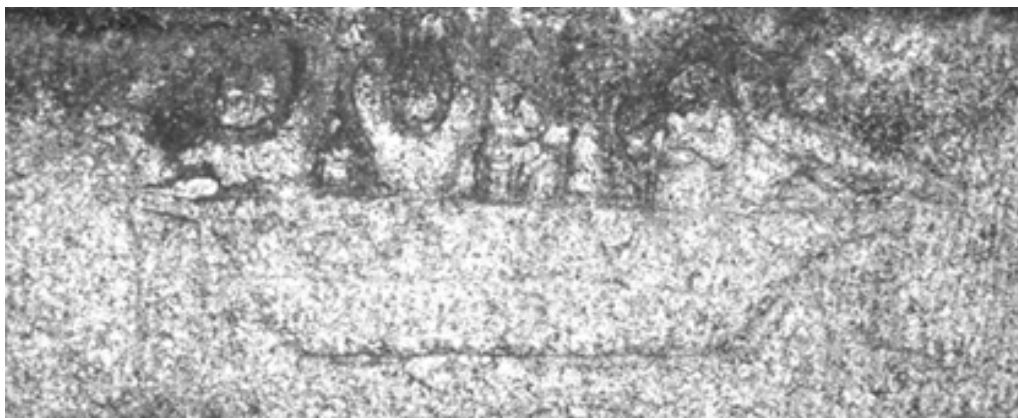


Figure.3.Hampi, Lotus Mahal Complex; a small boat capturing a ship.



The ship depicted in the relief is not deep enough to make out all the features of the ship but its general features can be ascertained. The bottom line of the boat is straight and the hanging stern and stem are very clearly visible in the form of carved line. Thus one can surmise that the hull of the ship was built with the keel, stern and stem posts are fixed in an angle which resembles the *Phatemaras* of west coast of India. There are indication of masts both in aft and fore ends. The upper body of the surrendering people above the navel is noticeable thus indicating the deck of the ship below the sheer line at a depth of three cubits. Below the triangular designs are carved which in all probability representing the Indian *Phatemaras* which are converted for the navel battles or Portuguese ship fitted with the cannons.

Moodabidri was the regional capital of the Vijayanagara under Jain Chowta dynasty who ruled a part of South Canara during Vijayanagara period. During 14th century this town emerged as a center of Jain religion, culture, art and architecture. Among the basadis of Moodabidri the most famous are Guru basadi, *Tribhuvana Tilaka Chudamani* Basadi also known as Thousand Pillar Temple and Ammanavara Basadi.

*Tribhuvana Tilaka Chudamani* is the largest and the most ornate of the Jain temples of South Canara. In vernacular tongue people call this as *Saavira Kambada Basadi basadi* or Thousand Pillared Basadi. In the literary works it is mentioned as *Tribhuvana Tilaka Chudamani*. This is a large granite temple was built in 1430 A.D. The bronze image of Lord Chandranatha Swami is installed in the sanctum of this basadi. This three stories construction was patronized by many rulers of different families, the Jain Bhattaraka Swamiji, merchants and the common people. The temple has an open pillared hall in front, consisting of a large variety of ornate pillars decorated with carvings typical of Vijayanagara style (Fig: 4).



Figure.4.Moodabidri: Tribhuvana Tilaka Chudamani basadi; General View

On the *adhithana* of the *Bhairadevi mantapa* of this basadi there are a relief sculpture of Chinese Dragon (Fig: 5) and African Giraffe (Fig: 6). The Earlier cited epigraphs tell us that the place was



Figure.5.Moodabidri: Tribhuvana Tilaka Chudamani basadi; Bhairadevi mantapa Sculpture of African Giraffe



Figure.6.Moodabidri: Tribhuvana Tilaka Chudamani basadi; Bhairadevi mantapa Sculpture of Chinese Dragon

adorned by merchants in the acts of buying and selling Chinese silk, pearls, precious stones and metals while describing the beauty of Venupura the modern Mudabidure. Further Karnataka's trans- oceanic contacts have been very well established by the inscription and these sculptures.

## Numismatic Evidences

The Directorate of Archaeology and Museums in Karnataka has a lot of coin collections in its various museums situated in different parts of the state. Very recently while documenting these coins a few ship type coins were noticed. A ship type coin belonging to the Vijayanagara period was noticed in the collection of Bangalore Museum and published in one of recent publications of the author. The details of the coin are as follows: It is made of gold having circular shape. Weight of the coin is 3.4 grams and it measures one centimeter in diameter and 2millimeter in thickness. On the obverse of the coin it has a Gandabherunda and on its reverse a Ship with to masts. The ship of this coin resembles the *pati*, a boat used in the old Mangalore port.

On a closer examination of the coin, one can notice the ship with its unfurled sails supports masts and stay ropes. At the bottom of the boat fish like object is noticed and this sign may even be interpreted as an anchor. Interestingly the fore portion of the ship is decorated like a swan which is common in royal ships of ancient times. There are absolutely no traces of any letter on the obverse or reverse. All these confirm that the picture depicted was a war ship (Gopal 2010).

The find spots and other details of the coin are not recorded. The coin has no legend on it. If it has to be identified in the absence of the legend the typological attributions have to be considered. *The Gandabherunda* types of coins were issued by the Vijayanagara kings; that too King, Achyutharaya is known to have issued coins with the motif of Gandabherunda. The foreign trade that the Vijayanagara kings maintained with the Portuguese from 1510 onwards makes us to think it might have been minted by the kings of Vijayanagara. But the coins of Achyutharaya with Gandabherunda have the name of the king in Nagari as legend as noticed in all other the Vijayanagara gold coins. The absence of the name of king as legend on the coin makes us of a think different attribution. Further probe in this direction and scientific investigations will answer these questions. With this background this new coin may be attributed to the period of the Achyutharaya of Vijayanagara.

In the light of the term *Naviga Prabhu*, mentioned in an inscription found at Sorab (Saletore 1934:58-72), is quite interesting. The kings of Vijayanagara had the naval force which can reach as far as Sri Lanka and capture the northern part of the Island. And at the same time motifs of the ships used in the west coast are depicted on one of the royal palace foundations at Hampi (Swamy 2010: 48-80 & Swamy 2012: 172-173). Very recently while documenting these coins a few ship type coins were noticed. R Gopal attributed that coin to the period of Keladi Nayakas and it was published in the annual proceedings of the South Indian Numismatic Society in 2007. He further says that particular the attribution of the coin to Keladi dynasty was very clearly substantiated through the

trade links of the dynasty with the foreign countries.

Contrary to this The Vijayanagara had very well established administrative units which was divided in to three provinces directly administrated by the Governors appointed by the Emperor and they are the executive officers. They controlled the entire commercial and trade activities of various guilds and in case of the misbehavior observed by the officer he even punished the offender and brought under control. Such incidents were discussed in length in the earlier pages of the same chapter. In the light of such vast administrative setup and the presence of the navel office at Mangalore the coin with ship and Gandaberundha motifs may very safely attributed to the Period of Achyutharaya. Another supporting argument in this case is that the coins issued by Achyutharaya have the Gandaberunda motifs has already in vogue. Thus it is safe to attribute this particular coin to Achyutharaya.

This particular variety of the ship can be compared with that of *manji* which operates in Karnataka coast and the other parts of the Western coast of India. The attribution of this coin is very difficult because there is no legend or the known marks of any royal families on either side of the coin. It is very difficult to accept the appearance of a single fish as the symbol of Alupas who were ruling in that region. But we can suspect that this coin was a small denomination of the Keladi Nayakas or it might have locally originated during the later period and it reflects the indigenous ship.

In the coastal region of the present Karnataka the administrative arrangement made by the Vijayanagara Empire, the economic, commercial activities carried on here, religious endowments given by the Emperors to the temples and other religious institutions, the presence of various merchant guilds, their trading activities, restoration of commercial and religious rites to various religious faiths, taxation pattern, import and export duties, presence of Naval officer at Mangalore, sculptural representation of boats and ships at Hampi and on the coins of

the period, occurrence of the ship names in the inscription and the literary works, presence of African Giraffe and China Dragon relief panels at Moodbidre and associated facts undoubtedly prove the commercial linkages of Vijayanagara with the nations of the West, Southeast Asia and China.

## ***Abbreviations***

*EC, Epigraphia Carnatica*

*Ep. Ind. Epigraphia Indica*

*Ind. Ant. Indian Antiquary*

*KI. Karnataka Inscriptions*

*SII. South Indian Inscriptions*

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